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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|--|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| 10/718,469 | 11/20/2003 | John R. Easom | 15264 | 1038 |
| 7590 | 06/17/2005 | | EXAMINER | |
| R. GALE RHODES, JR., OF COUNSEL MOSER, PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P. Suite 100 595 Shrewsbury Avenue Shrewsbury, NJ 07702 | | | DOSTER GREENE, DINNATIA JO | |
| | | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
| | | | 3743 | |
| DATE MAILED: 06/17/2005 | | | | |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) |
| | 10/718,469 | EASOM, JOHN R. |
| | Examiner Dinnatia Doster-Greene | Art Unit 3743 |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 November 2003.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: Detail Action.

DETAILED ACTION

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Correa (U.S. Patent No. 6,119,694) in view of Shaffer (U.S. Patent No. 4,326,515). Correa discloses in Figs. 1 and 4-7 the claimed invention with the exception of a one-piece elastic headband. However, Shaffer, which also relates to a tube retaining means, teaches that it is known to utilize an elastic headband to mount and hold a tube connected within a patient. Thus, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to incorporate the one-piece elastic headband for the headband (18) of Correa for the purpose of providing a nasal mask having fewer components to manufacture. Furthermore, the Office takes the position that the use of elastic headbands as a means to retain a tube within the medical device art is well known as evident by the numerous prior art references cited.

Claims 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Correa in view of Shaffer and further in view of Haber (U.S. Patent No. 4,790,307). As discussed above, the combination of Correa and Shaffer discloses the claimed invention with the exception of a pair of generally opposed ear holes. However, Haber which also relates to a mask, teaches that it is known in the medical device art to provide ear holes within a mask. Thus, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to provide ear holes in the headband of the combination of Correa and Shaffer should the headband obstruct the wearer's ears for the purpose of enabling the wearer such as a surgeon to hear and communicate during surgery.

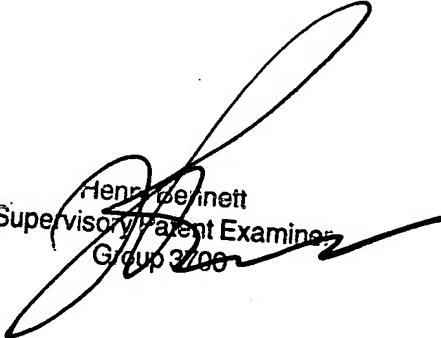
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dinnatia Doster-Greene whose telephone number is 571-272-7143. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Henry Bennett can be reached on 571-272-4791. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ddg


Henry Bennett
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3700